

Callahan's work to argue that most choices for abortion are really not as free and pro-women as assumed. Although in his introduction, Camosy recommends humility, solidarity with interlocutors, and avoiding dismissive words/phrases, I fear that some might feel his writing a bit patronizing here.

In the final chapter, Camosy creatively suggests "a way forward" by proposing legislation: the Mother and Prenatal Child Protection Act (MPCPA, although some "pro-choicers" might hold that MPCPA stands for Morality Police Concerning Pregnancy and Abortion). This piece of legislation seeks to protect the life of the fetus while also giving due consideration to legal protection and social support for the mother.

I appreciate Camosy's audacity and hope that this book will spark discussion in classrooms, parish groups, and beyond. An agent should get him invited to speak in as many venues possible, including TV talk shows.

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*Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses.*

Edited by David E. DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer. New York: Orbis Books, 2015. xxiii + 216 pages. \$38.00 (paper).

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*Conscience and Catholicism* grew from a 2014 seminar at Santa Clara University that explored Catholic conscience formation. David DeCosse's extended essay on the subject in the *National Catholic Reporter* spurred the seminar, and the US Catholic bishops' conflict with the Obama administration over the Affordable Care Act—framed as a conscience issue—as well as John Paul II's and Benedict XVI's insistence on the primacy of the magisterium over individual consciences prompted DeCosse to write the *NCR* essay. The volume contains fourteen essays from individual authors with a revised version of DeCosse's original piece. The authors often refer to each other's contributions throughout, but each can be read independently of the broader collection.

DeCosse's *NCR* article argues that Catholic tradition identified three important principles in conscience formation: moral law, practical reason, and freedom. He saw the American bishops elevate moral law so powerfully as to crowd out the individual's incorporation of practical reason and freedom in forming his or her conscience. The contributors to this volume do not address DeCosse's framework directly, and perhaps for that reason his essay appears at the end rather than the beginning of the volume. But most of the essays amplify the more contextual development of conscience that

challenges the primacy of moral law in an effort to “open up space for advancing an alternative view of conscience with deep roots in the Catholic tradition” (xvi). The volume accomplishes this aim well, and readers will come away with a richer appreciation for the ways humans form their consciences through their lived experiences—their engagement with their social, political, cultural, and biological environments. The authors present consciences as dynamic, contingent, and formed through conscious and unconscious dialogue with others.

The US context shaped DeCosse’s initial offering, but fully half of the essays address conscience formation in theory or other lands. James Keenan, SJ, helps readers to see that US theologians came later to valuing a contextually informed conscience than did European Catholics. World War II’s horrors and heroism pushed Europeans to look beyond a rigid conformity to moral manuals for guidance on living good lives. *Humanae Vitae* brought Americans to this same perspective. Osamu Takeuchi, SJ, proposes that a dialogue with Asian cultures will further contextualize Catholic conscience formation, and Eugene Rodrigues, BS, shares that India’s efforts to force citizens to convert to Hinduism poses threats to individual consciences not seen in the United States since the Supreme Court fully embraced the separation of church and state. Emilce Cuda sees consciences forming in Argentina through political struggle in a cultural field, and concludes that the tension over same-sex marriage obscures the real questions of political power at stake in the debate. Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator, SJ, recounts the struggles that Catholic health-care ministers face in Africa over the use of condoms to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Half of the essays in this volume focus on conscience formation in the United States in recent years. Readers might recognize some of these cases from their widespread media attention. Carol Bayley recounts the deliberations at a Catholic hospital that saved a patient’s life by terminating her pregnancy. The local bishop withdrew both the hospital’s Catholic identity and his permission to host masses on the premises, and told a woman religious on the ethics committee that she had excommunicated herself by participating in the care decision. Bryan Massingale sees unconscious racism shaping white Americans’ consciences as they react to police shootings of teenage African Americans. Linda Hogan suggests that we can debate marriage equality civilly only if we acknowledge that all participants act sincerely on their consciences.

Many of the authors draw explicitly from *Gaudium et Spes* on the Catholic support for individual conscience formation and the imperative that Catholics have to follow their own. The essays ground their positions firmly in Catholic tradition as they push the church to recognize and honor the

“people’s most secret core, and their sanctuary.” Reading this collection of essays, one comes away impressed with the authentic believers’ engagement with this central life purpose.

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*The Bread of the Strong: Lacouturisme and the Folly of the Cross, 1910–1985.*

By Jack Lee Downey. New York: Fordham University Press, 2015. x + 266 pages. \$60.00.

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Upon meeting Dorothy Day, Peter Maurin immediately shared his “Easy Essays,” his “preferred medium of public theology—brief, pithy, semi-poetic, grammatically toxic tongue twisters about politics, holiness, and anarchism” (184). In this passage and throughout the book, Jack Lee Downey vividly conveys astute assessment with the dexterity of a historian gifted with wry wit. Desiring to develop a deeper understanding of Dorothy Day, he sets out in this book to explore the retreat movement in which she participated for thirty-five years, giving particular attention to the connections among contemplative theology, asceticism, and radical activism (12). He succeeds admirably.

“The Retreat,” as Dorothy often referred to it, grew out of the particular brand of “maximalist Christian doctrine” cultivated by the Québécois Jesuit Onésime Lacouture. Augustine, John of the Cross, and Bernard of Clairveaux figure prominently in a thick historical and cultural account of Lacouture’s ascetical theology and spiritual formation. Over against “domesticating mediocrity,” he held to the countercultural “strong meat of the Gospel,” relating his rigorist moral exhortations principally through the medium of a retreat format developed initially for clergy. Decrying all manner of creature comforts, he reserved special vitriol for the habit of smoking. In the many theological volleys with skeptics in which he and his American disciple, Fr. John Hugo, became enmeshed, their condemnation of smoking emerged as a frequent flashpoint, signifying for their critics a scrupulosity bordering on Jansenism as well as a Pelagian perfectionism (e.g., 93 and 150 ff.). For Lacouture and Hugo, this pernicious habit represented moral laxity due to insufficient motivation rooted supernaturally in God’s love. In the face of “pagan” sensuality and materialism in the church and in the dominant culture, self-mortification was an essential aspect of Jesus’ injunction to his followers to take up the cross (147).

To a laywoman who reputedly used to drink gangsters under the table (173), such emphasis on austerity mixed with contemplative spirituality